

**Activity Specific**

# **Firearms Safety Plan**

**For North Slope of Alaska and  
Adjacent Arctic Ocean**

**Cloud and Radiation Testbed  
Sites**



# Table of Contents

Project Overview	<a href="#">*</a>
Management Policy for the Use of Firearms	<a href="#">*</a>
Authorization to Carry Weapons	<a href="#">*</a>
Authorized Weapons and Deterrent Devices	<a href="#">*</a>
Training	<a href="#">*</a>
Initial Training	<a href="#">*</a>
Retraining	<a href="#">*</a>
Additional Mandatory Training	<a href="#">*</a>
Training Records	<a href="#">*</a>
Weapons Storage, Maintenance, and Access	<a href="#">*</a>
Maintenance and Inspection	<a href="#">*</a>
Controlled Access	<a href="#">*</a>
Shipment of Weapons and Ammunition	<a href="#">*</a>
Independent Firearm Safety Program Review	<a href="#">*</a>
Firearm Safety Rules	<a href="#">*</a>
Use of Firearms at CART Sites	<a href="#">*</a>
Determination To Issue Weapons	<a href="#">*</a>
Inspection of Weapons (Prior To Loading)	<a href="#">*</a>
Loading and Carrying Weapons	<a href="#">*</a>
Emergency Response and Communications	<a href="#">*</a>
Records Summary	<a href="#">*</a>

## Abbreviations

AAO	Adjacent Arctic Ocean
ARM	Atmospheric Radiation Measurement (Program)
BSP	Bear Safety Plan
CART	Cloud and Radiation Test (Site)
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
FSP	Firearm Safety Plan
NNSI	Non-proliferation and National Security Institute
NSA	North Slope of Alaska
SM	Site Manager

## For More Information

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# **Activity Specific Firearms Safety Plan**

## **For North Slope of Alaska and Adjacent Arctic Ocean**

### **Cloud and Radiation Testbed Sites**

#### **Project Overview**

As a major part of the Department of Energy's (DOE's) participation in the US Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), the NSA/AAO Cloud and Radiation Test Bed (CART) is being developed with its central facility near the town of Barrow, and with a number of instrumentation locations in more remote areas on the North Slope. Selected instrumentation has been operated on the sea ice of the Arctic Ocean in collaboration with a National Science Foundation project called SHEBA (Surface Heat Budget of the Arctic Ocean). Firearms safety on all project-related work at all project locations will be governed by this plan. In addition to a data acquisition center within the NSA Project Complex near Barrow, the central facility will consist of instrumentation shelters out on the tundra for meteorological instrumentation that will be installed, maintained in an operational condition, and occasionally repaired. The Site Manager (SM) bears overall responsibility for defining the Firearms Safety Plan (with DOE approval), and for insuring that the Safety Plan is followed by all project participants. The project participants include DOE Laboratory personnel, other ARM Program Scientists and instrument mentors, and subcontractors working on the site.

#### **Management Policy for the Use of Firearms**

Polar bears are a well-recognized hazard on the North Slope of Alaska. Local public safety and wildlife management organizations strongly recommend that outside of towns and villages, people carry appropriate weapons to defend against polar bears during most of the year. It is Sandia's management philosophy that anyone bearing firearms while on official project businesses are to do so in a safe and responsible manner. Project personnel routinely working out on the tundra and/or the ice will be trained in the use of designated protective weapons, and their performance monitored to make certain that a continued view towards individual and public safety is maintained. Untrained project personnel visiting such areas will not be issued project firearms, but will be accompanied by armed, weapons-trained individuals when appropriate. The designated weapons (shotguns with specified ammunition) assigned to the project are to be used only by NSA/AAO project personnel while on official project business. Only project weapons may be carried by project personnel while on project business. Should the situation arise that an inadequate number of project weapons are available on site in operational condition, the Site Manager (SM) or designated alternate may arrange for the temporary use of additional weapons by the project through local North Slope agencies.

This is a firearms specific safety plan. It is only one part of a complete package of SOP's and OP's that describe the overall operational and other administrative controls that detail how safety will be assured on the North Slope CART site. A Bear Safety Plan accompanies this Firearm Safety Plan and must read and understood prior to the use of firearms on ARM/NSA projects.

## **Authorization to Carry Weapons**

The SM or designated alternate shall specify which personnel are authorized to carry project weapons during work at the CART site. The SM or alternate shall add the name of each authorized individual to the log sheet attached to this plan along with the authorized time period. The SM shall have the responsibility to periodically check the log entries to assure that only authorized personnel carry project weapons. The Site Manager or alternate shall have the responsibility to discontinue the authorization of individuals to carry weapons on project business at any time for just cause. Failure to keep firearms training current as required is such a cause.

## **Authorized Weapons and Ammunition**

The firearms and ammunition that may be carried by authorized project personnel are the following:

Shotguns:                      Remington 12 gauge short barrel shotgun, Model 870

Ammunition:                12 Gauge, 2¾ inch Brenneke Slug

These articles are consistent with the policy of the North Slope Borough Wildlife Management Department, the Departments of Natural Resources of the Northwest Territories and of Manitoba, Canada, and other organizations charged with managing wildlife and/or maintaining public safety in the Arctic. Project personnel are limited to use of the above firearms and ammunition only. Use of any other firearms or ammunition is prohibited. Other ammunition may be used as specified by the firearms safety instructor during training classes.

## **Training**

To carry a firearm on project business, an authorized user must:

- Have successfully completed the shotgun training.
- Be current in their training.
- Have read the Firearm Safety Plan and accompanying Bear Safety Plan and designated so by signature of attached signature form.
- Have completed first aid and CPR classes.

Each of these elements is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

## **Initial Training**

Individuals designated by the SM or alternate shall be trained by certified instructors from the DOE Safeguards and Security, Non-proliferation and National Security Institute. These instructors will provide a live fire shotgun training course which will include firearms manipulation, marksmanship, as well as weapon maintenance, storage and cold-weather care. When this course has been successfully completed, the project participant shall read this document and sign the attached signature form.

## **Retraining**

Re-training shall be repeated on an annual basis. As a result of the logistical difficulties in arranging personnel training on the North Slope, annual retraining will have a plus or minus one-month grace period in the definition of annual.

Annual retraining topics will consist of the following:

- Review of shotgun nomenclature, marksmanship, manipulation, and malfunction clearance
- Practice manipulation and firing with birdshot and slugs
- Fire the familiarization course of fire with slugs
- Firearms cleaning

This course, FST100, will be approximately four hours in duration. Records of the retaining will be kept at the site of the training (such as the North Slope CART site or the NNSI) and in the ARM/NSA project office at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque.

## **Additional Mandatory Training**

In addition to firearms safety training, all individuals authorized to carry firearms shall complete a Red Cross First Aid course and a CPR course, taught by certified first aid instructors. It is the responsibility of each individual to schedule and maintain currency in first aid and CPR. Copies of training certificates should be forwarded to the ARM Project office at Sandia National Laboratories. In addition to Red Cross first aid training, a first aid training class on puncture wounds must be completed. This specialized training will be offered in conjunction with the annual shotgun refresher training course.

## **Training Records**

Training records shall be maintained on the Sandia TEDS (Training and Education Data System) by the NSA/AAO project office at Sandia National Laboratories. Copies of the training and maintenance records kept at Sandia will periodically be sent to the NSA/AAO Site operations contractor at Barrow. At a minimum, the training records will

be transferred on an annual basis, or whenever an issue arises as to the currency of training and maintenance.

## **Weapons Storage, Maintenance, and Access**

All weapons planned for project use will be inspected and maintained by a certified armorer at the DOE's NNSI on Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB) or at the NSA site. All weapons will be inspected and appropriate maintenance performed annually. Typically, half the project weapons will be in storage at the NNSI and available for training in Albuquerque and the other half will be in service at the CART site on the North Slope. Arrangements for weapons storage on the North Slope will be reviewed and approved by a designated Sandia firearms safety engineer.

## **Maintenance and Inspection**

The Remington 870 shotguns will be maintained and inspected annually in accordance with manufacture's guidelines by a certified armorer. Firearms may be inspected by an armorer at the NSA site or the firearms may be sent to the NNSI facility in Albuquerque for maintenance and inspection. Proper transportation of weapons and ammunition is covered in the following section.

Since the North Slope site is not fully staffed year-round, there will be a plus or minus one-month grace period in the definition of annual. Through this process, every shotgun will have proper maintenance and be inspected every 11 to 13 months.

## **Controlled Access**

While in storage at the CART site, the weapons will be kept in a locked gun cabinet at the duplex or in the instrumentation shelter. Only the SM or his designated alternates will have access to the keys to unlock the cabinets. A logbook will be used for issuing shotguns and ammunition.

A signout sheet will be kept with the shotguns in the gun cabinets. The information to be recorded on the sheets is specified below in the section "Loading and Carrying Weapons."

## **Shipment of Weapons and Ammunition**

The SM or alternate will authorize personnel at the NNSI to ship weapons and ammunition to him or to another authorized Sandia employee or subcontractor at the NSA/AAO CART Site, or the SM or alternate will make arrangements with the NNSI to release the weapons and/or ammunition to him or to another authorized Sandia employee or subcontractor.

This individual will also coordinate with the appropriate Sandia transportation organizations to insure proper preparation (insure all weapons are unloaded, etc.) and packaging of these materials. These organizations and individuals will insure that transportation of these materials complies with all applicable laws and regulations. They will insure that all necessary paperwork is completed in a timely manner and that copies of all transactions including inventory of all items being shipped, bills of lading, etc. are filed in the ARM/NSA project office at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque.

## **Independent Firearm Safety Program Review**

An independent assessment of internal operations shall be annually conducted at the North Slope site. Gun safety experts at Sandia and DOE completed an initial assessment of the safety plan. Subsequent annual assessments will be performed by gun safety experts or Sandia ES&H personnel that are familiar with the firearm safety issues at the North Slope site.

Since the North Slope site is not fully staffed year-round, there will be a plus or minus one-month grace period in the definition of annual.

## **Firearm Safety Rules**

The following safety rules will be strictly adhered to for the safe transportation, handling, loading, unloading and use of weapons. These rules include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Treat all weapons as if they are loaded.
2. Never point a firearm at anything you are not willing to destroy.
3. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.
4. Be sure of your target.
5. Know what is down range from your target.
6. All firearms shall be carried in the manner specified in the appropriate instruction manual or in accordance with instructions received during training.
7. Weapons shall not be left unattended and/or unsecured.
8. Loading and unloading of weapons shall be done only in a prescribed manner and location. Reloading in the field is permitted as necessary.
9. Unloaded weapons and ammunition must be stored in a predetermined secured location.
10. When a weapon is being cleaned, live ammunition for that weapon shall not be allowed in the cleaning area.



## **Use of Firearms at CART Sites**

### **Determination To Issue Weapons**

During those periods of time when there is a perceived bear hazard, the SM or alternate will determine which and how many team members should be issued weapons. The decision to issue weapons and their number is to be based on the severity of the perceived threat and the possible separation of the team into subgroups during the work to be accomplished. On the sea ice, by definition, a polar bear threat always exists. Weapons may also be issued by the SM or alternate for local firearm practice as approved by the NNSI.

When checking weapons out to project personnel, the SM or his alternate will ensure that the person receiving the weapon is not under the influence of alcohol or drugs and is otherwise fit for duty.

### **Inspection of Weapons (Prior To Loading)**

Authorized project employees who are issued firearms shall inspect their assigned weapon to insure that the weapon is not loaded and is free from obvious damage. They will also perform a function check of the weapon. These checks will be performed according to the manufacturer's instructions or according to techniques learned during firearms training. The inspection for damage and the function test must be completed and the weapon accepted as ready for use prior to loading the weapon.

### **Loading and Carrying Weapons**

When a group is preparing for work in a remote area or for local firearm practice, the weapons will be loaded following the instructions and methods learned during training. All safety procedures outlined earlier will be strictly enforced. Only pre-authorized ammunition (slugs) will be used. The weapon will be loaded at the staging area before leaving for the field. All weapons will be put in the "half-load" (no round in the chamber) condition, and the weapon placed in the "SAFE" mode (the safety will be on). Unless and until a bear is sighted (or until training commences at a NNSI-approved firing range), all weapons will be carried in the half-load condition with the safety on.

In the field, firearms shall be carried with an approved sling or other device in a manner learned during firearms training to insure muzzle control at all times. The weapons shall always be under the personal control of the person issued the firearm (in his/her immediate possession, in a locked rack, or locked inside a vehicle).

After completion of work in a remote area or local firearm practice, and upon arrival back at the staging area, the weapon will be cleared according to posted procedures and stored in an approved, locked, storage cabinet.

Weapons that are being transported in populated areas shall be transported in an unloaded condition.

A logbook shall be maintained in the firearms storage cabinet to record all weapon handling and firing. Information to be recorded is the date and time of each activity, the nature of the activity, the designations of the weapons involved, and the printed name and the signature or initials of the individual performing the activity. The entries in this log shall be available to the SM or his designee at all times. The SM shall review and sign the log documenting that the review has taken place at least once a year.

Weapons safety is a very important aspect of environmental safety and health. Weapons, loaded or unloaded, shall not be pointed at, or otherwise used to threaten any other human being, even in jest. Failure to observe this and the other provisions of this plan may serve as grounds for disciplinary action.

Non-project personnel residing at, traveling across, visiting or working on or near NSA/AAO CART facilities cannot be prohibited from carrying firearms since DOE does not own the land occupied by the CART site. Non-project personnel are exposed to the same bear hazards as project personnel and are entitled to exercise protective measures. Sandia does not assume any responsibility for the safety of non-project personnel.

## **Emergency Response and Communications**

Communications with field teams at the NSA/AAO/CART Site are accomplished primarily through the use of cellular telephones. Work practices require that at least one member of a remote site work party carry a cellular phone and spare battery. The cellular phone shall be used to initiate an emergency response in the event of an accident involving a firearm. The emergency response number (911) shall be noted on the cellular telephones in use at the NSA/AAO. The individual calling for assistance should report the following information to emergency response personnel:

1. the nature of the accident
2. the accident location
3. the current condition of injured party
4. the type of weapon causing injury, etc.

The cellular telephones and radios to be carried shall be tested for proper operation by each work group prior to leaving for a remote location.

## **Records Summary**

A copy of the Firearms Training and Use Authorization record sheet is attached. A current copy of this sheet will be kept in the ES&H Firearms Safety file in Barrow and at the ARM/NSA program office at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque. The record will be updated after each annual training/retraining classes. The Site Manager will also approve those trained individuals who are authorized to carry firearms on the same record sheet.